

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BLANTY 01018 090726Z

12

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FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7266

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MI, TZ, OAU

SUBJ: BANDA DENIES MERCENARIES IN MALAWI; SCORES TANZANIA;

INVITES OAU INSPECTION

REF: DAR 2669

1. REACTING ANGRILY TO DAR DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL, PRESIDENT BANDA INSISTED THERE NO TRUTH WHATEVER TO REPORTS OF MERCENARIES IN MALAWI. HE QUESTIONED NATURE OF TANZANIAN FRIENDSHIP WHICH WOULD PERMIT PUBLICATION OF SUCH VIEWS WITHOUT VERIFICATION. HE INVITED OAU TO SEND DELEGATION TO INSPECT AND TANZANIA TO SEND ANYONE IT LIKED TO ASCERTAIN SITUATION FOR ITSELF. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 BLANTY 01018 090726Z

2. PRESIDENT BANDA CALLED SPECIAL PRESS CONFERENCE AUGUST 8 TO REBUT TANZANIA DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL OF AUGUST 6 (REFTEL). BANDA DESCRIBED ALLEGATIONS OF MERCENARIES IN MALAWI AS FAKED LIES: HOARE NEVER IN MALAWI, TO PRESIDENT'S KNOWLEDGE, NOR WERE THERE ANY MERCENARIES "WHITE, YELLOW, BROWN OR BLACK". BOTH JARDIM AND HOARE HAD ALSO DENIED REPORTS, BANDA NOTED.

3. BANDA SPOKE WITH SHOCK AND DISAPPOINTMENT OF DAILY NEWS' EXPRESSION OF SURPRISE AT MALAWI'S ALLEGED ACTION AND ITS DEMAND FOR AN EXPLANATION. FOR TWO YEARS, HE SAID, MALAWI HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE TANZANIA WANTED MALAWI'S FRIENDSHIP. NOTING DAILY NEWS IS GOVERNMENT-OWNED, HE ASKED HOW SO-CALLED FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT COULD PERMIT PUBLICATION OF SUCH STORIES WITHOUT VERIFICATION. WHY COULD EDITOR OF NEWS NOT BOTHER TO CHECK WITH MALAWI? BOTH TANZANIA AND MALAWI ARE IN OAU; WHERE IS VAUNTED AFRICAN UNITY?

4. SINCE TANZANIA HAD RAISED QUESTION, BANDA SAID HE HAD NOT CHOICE BUT TO INVITE OAU TO SEND DELEGATION TO INVESTIGATE. TELEGRAM HAD ALREADY BEEN SENT TO PRESIDENT OF SOMALIA REQUESTING DELGATION'S DISPATCH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. BANDA SAID HE ALSO WAS INVITING EDITOR OF DAR DAILY NEWS AND ANY OTHER TANZANIANS WHO WISHED ASCERTAIN SITUATION FOR THEMSELVES.

5. CONCLUDING, PRESIDENT CITED EXISTENCE IN MALAWI OF NUMEROUS MOZAMBIQUE NATIONALISTS, PRINCIPALLY FRELIMO. THESE HE DESCRIBED AS "FLESH OF MY FLESH, BLOOD OF MY BLOOD" WITH FREE ACCESS ANYWHERE IN MALAWI. IF ANY MERCENARIES PRESENT IN MALAWI, FRELIMO SURELY WOULD HAVE KNOWN.

6. COMMENT: BANDA'S APPEAL FOR OAU INVESTIGATION IS AS CLEVER AS IT IS UNUSUAL. VISITORS (IF ANY) RATHER THAN ENCOUNTERING NON-EXISTANT MERCENARIES WOULD BE EXPOSED TO LOCAL FRELIMO AND TO BANDA'S VIEWS SUCH AS EXPRESSED PARA 5, ABOVE. HE DOUBTLESS FEELS HIS STATURE AS TRUE AFRICAN LEADER WOULD BENEFIT BY SUCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BLANTY 01018 090726Z

SCRUTINY. AT SAME TIME HIS SUSPICION OF TANZANIAN MOTIVES TOWARD HIS GOVERNMENT--AT BEST THINLY VEILED OVER PAST YEARS -- WILL NOT BE LESSENED BY CURRENT FLAP.
FARBER

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